

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DAILY PRESS BRIEFING

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 1983, 12:10 P.M.
(ON THE RECORD UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED)

MR. ROMBERG: Good afternoon. One announcement. Following the meeting between President Reagan and President Carstens of the Federal Republic of Germany, a senior Department official will brief on BACKGROUND in the White House Press Briefing Room on Tuesday, October 4 at approximately 11:30 a.m.

That's it for announcements. I'll be happy to take your questions.

Q Alan, does the United States see the recent moves by the Druze to be the beginning of a fragmentation of Lebanon?

A We've noted the announcement in the press over the weekend, and also Mr. Jumblatt's public statement that this step will in no way prejudice Druze participation in national reconciliation talks.

It should be very clear that our support for the principle of Lebanese unity would rule out measures by any of the communities or factions that would perpetuate factional strife. Until we know more about the practical effect of the measures proposed by Mr. Jumblatt, we would have no comment on them.

We urge that the political process leading to national reconciliation begin as soon as possible under the leadership of President Gemayel and with the full participation of leaders of the various Lebanese communities as provided for in the ceasefire agreement.

Q Would you understand him to be saying that he will still take part in this dialogue?

A As I say, he apparently indicated publicly as well that this step in no way prejudiced Druze participation in national reconciliation talks.

Q How do you intend to find out about -- is there going to be a meeting with Mr. Jumblatt -- between Jumblatt and American officials, or what?

A I don't know of any meeting scheduled, Ghassan. There could well be at some point meetings. There had been discussions from time to time, of course. I just don't know. I saw a press report that he was in Greece, so I don't know when he will be around to talk.

There are discussions going on all the time among the various groups, and we are obviously, as I said at the end of that statement, looking for the national reconciliation dialogue to begin as soon as possible. So there will obviously need to be continuing discussions leading to that.

Q A copy of that?

A Yes, sure.

Q He also urged Druze officers to desert from the Lebanese Army. Did you have any comment on that?

A I didn't see that. I've seen, in fact, some reports that there were purportedly some desertions, but I also saw in one report this morning, for example, indications that the Lebanese commanders had let Druze leave their units, and so on. We don't know what the facts are. We're looking into them, but I can't confirm any of that.

Q The basis of that report, I believe, was he addressed a Lebanese Army barracks where there were any number of Druze militia.

A Again, I can't confirm reports until we've seen them, but we're looking into them.

Q Any progress on the observers, the neutral observers?

A Those discussions continue in New York and elsewhere, but I don't have anything to report to you on progress.

Q There was this morning of -- a report this morning of a break of the ceasefire. Can you confirm that or do you know anything more about it?

A The Marines have reported that two mortar rounds impacted in the vicinity of their positions earlier today. There were no casualties. They did not return fire, and this appears to be an isolated incident in which fire was not directed at the Marines.

Q Could you look into them, especially the mishap one?

A I will take a look. On the first one, I don't think I will be looking at. I will look and see if there is anything at this point that we want to say about the second issue.

Q I apologize in advance for what may sound like a lengthy and somewhat tendacious question, but because of it, you will understand why.

On September 15th, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, John Monjo, spoke to the House Foreign Affairs Committee in a policy statement regarding Cambodia, Kampuchea.

In restating U.S. policy he said -- quote -- We do not provide aid of any kind or have any contact with the Khmer Rouge, and our welcoming of the coalition in Cambodia does not imply any support for the Khmer Rouge. Unquote.

In its current issue, Newsweek magazine says, "The Central Intelligence Agency is working with the Chinese to supply arms to the forces of former Cambodian ruler, Pol Pot, which, of course, is the Khmer Rouge, now waging hit and run attacks on the current Saigon-supported regime."

My question is: Was Mr. Monjo correctly stating the policy of the U.S. Government or only the policy of the State Department? What is the status of his statement that the United States does not provide aid of any kind to the Khmer Rouge?

A I would, I guess, address that in two parts.

First of all, obviously, I can't address directly the Newsweek point since it alleges intelligence activities, but I would refer you to Mr. Monjo's statement as the statement of policy of the United States Government, and I would refer to it as a valid statement and what you should take as our policy.

Q Could I go to one other one of a similar nature?

As you know, in 1975, I believe it was, Congress passed the so-called Clark Amendment which forbids the United States Government, the CIA and other people, from aiding covert, undercover activities regarding Angola.

The current issue of Newsweek Magazine says that CIA training, arms, and financial assistance are also given to military forces in Ethiopia, Angola, and the Sudan.

Is the Reagan Administration abiding by the 1975 Clark Amendment, which has not been repealed?

A Don, to my knowledge, it certainly is continuing to abide by the Clark Amendment, but I would also suggest you might want to get reaffirmation of that from the CIA since it affects their operations.

Q Alan, does the Administration have a position on House Resolution 323, which is Congressman Gonzales's resolution calling for an investigation of Henry Kissinger's conflict of interest in his current position?

A No, I don't have anything on it?

Q Alan, is there anything new on the black box?

A No. The search continues. There is nothing new, no new pings, no new developments, but, again, I would refer you to the Pentagon, just to be sure there is nothing, but I am pretty sure that is where we are.

Q Do you have any reaction to the demonstrations in Moscow?

A No.

Q Alan, before asking this question, I want to disagree with my friend, Don. I didn't think it was a tendentious question. I thought it was a very legitimate question that needed some preface, so I think that the precedent has been established, and I think it was a very good question.

A Since you like to give prefaces to your questions. (Laughter.)

Q Right, and I think -

A Could we have the question, Lester?

Q -- we should all have this opportunity. I don't often agree with The Washington Post, but I think this was a good question. (Laughter)